

A SQUABBLE BETWEEN ROBERTS AND HIS MASTERS?

One of the most amusing bits from this article on the upcoming Phase II publication (I guess we have to call the stuff Roberts has delayed further, Phase II.2?) is its description of a dispute between BushCo and Senator Pat Roberts.

The Republican chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee lashed out at the White House on Thursday, criticizing attempts by the Bush administration to keep secret parts of a report on the role Iraqi exiles played in building the case for war against Iraq.

The chairman, Senator Pat Roberts of Kansas, said his committee had completed the first two parts of its investigation of prewar intelligence. But he chastised the White House for efforts to classify most of the part that examines intelligence provided to the Bush administration by the Iraqi National Congress, an exile group.

"I have been disappointed by this administration's unwillingness to declassify material contained in these reports, material which I believe better informs the public, but that does not," I repeat, "does not" jeopardize intelligence operations, sources and methods," Mr. Roberts said in a statement issued Thursday.

Uh huh. Consider me skeptical. I think it more likely that Roberts realized he couldn't defend classifying this information since the Democrats (and a few restless Republicans) know well it doesn't fit any rules of classification. That is, Roberts knows he has to fight BushCo on this, or lose his shaky claim to be an

intelligence reformer.